



## **Darrington Strong, Inc.**

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Peter Forbes,

Darrington District Ranger, Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National forest

1405 Emens Street

Darrington, WA 98241

Dear Mr. Forbes:

Darrington Strong, Inc. is a nonprofit organization comprised of local Darrington area businesses and community members. We work in partnership with other nonprofit organizations and governments. Our goals are to build a thriving Darrington, stable economy and empowered community.

### **Darrington Project Specific Comments:**

#### **\*Boulder River Trailhead and Road Storage**

Darrington Strong does not support this project to make the Boulder River Trail longer by putting the existing road to the trailhead into storage. The current trail is not maintained to its current distance so it does not make sense to make this trail longer. We would like to suggest the proposed new trailhead location be developed to serve as alternative backup parking for high use parking and leave the road intact.

#### **\*Buck Creek Campground Restoration**

Darrington Strong supports this project to upgrade the campsites in the Buck Creek Campground. This is a popular campground and encourages visitors to Darrington. This campground is close to Suiattle River access, several popular trails including the Suiattle River Trail accessing the Glacier Peak Wilderness.

#### **\*Darrington Storm Damage Repairs**

Darrington Strong fully supports this project and supports the concept of these projects in the future. It is vital that we restore safe access for our existing roads, trails and campgrounds which is not just vital to our local Darrington economy but the economy of Washington State as well. Funding for such projects which depend on appropriated road maintenance funding and ERFO funding should be prioritized by multi use and higher use first. We encourage increased Stewardship Projects to be considered to also fund Forest Roads.

### **\*Lost Creek Bridge Replacement**

Darrington Strong supports this project and believes FSR #49, Sloan Creek Road is a very valuable asset to Darrington serving as a recreation destination. We would also like to encourage consideration of this road for a future Stewardship Project that would include creation and/or retreatment of wildlife habitat openings and restore needed forest health. Revenues generated could be appropriated for bridge upgrades and materials to stabilize the roadbed.

### **\*North Mountain Lookout Restoration**

Darrington Strong supports this project which is being led and funded by Friends for North Mountain, a division of Darrington Strong, Inc. Restoring this historical fire lookout will not only preserve a very important part of local heritage but will also be a very sought after overnight stay and generate revenues to support local economy.

### **\*North Zone Huckleberry Enhancement**

Darrington Strong supports this project and believes it adds valuable habitat as we look to the future with global warming and other changes. It preserves gathering of valuable plants highly prized by our native people for hundreds of years, improves wildlife habitat and encourages forest health. Huckleberry Enhancement demonstrates active management of vegetation and wise use of our National Forest.

### **\*Darrington District Blowdown Salvage**

Darrington Strong supports all projects that use recovery of old growth trees to be sold for high end value materials. When significant blowdown comes down on forest roads providing structural lumber this valuable resource should be sold to generate revenues, and stimulate needed jobs.

### **\*Segelsen Collaborative Vegetation & Aquatic Restoration Project**

Darrington Strong supports this project and any future projects like this one. We feel that this project under Stewardship Contracting offers many solutions to challenges we are currently seeing to keep both recreation open and maintain healthy habitat meeting the management objectives of the Northwest Forest Plan including the Aquatic Conservation Strategy. We are hoping this is a pilot project that will pave the way for futures projects like this in the future

Sincerely,

Nels Rasmussen, D.C., president Darrington Strong, Inc

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